

No. 21.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th November, 1885.

No. 19.

In my letter of the 7th instant I enclosed a memorandum addressed by Ministers to His Excellency the Governor on the islands question; and I now wish you to be good enough to *delete* the reference to His Excellency's despatches in paragraph 3, as per enclosed. The Despatch No. 43 therein mentioned refers to the New Hebrides only.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 22.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 27th November, 1885.

No. 7. In reference to your letter of the 20th August last, regarding the purchase of German interests at Samoa, including claims to land, I have to state,—

1. The subject was brought before a Committee of the House of Representatives that had to deal with petitions from Fiji for annexation. The report of the Committee has been already forwarded to you, and you will observe from it that the Committee and Parliament seemed disinclined to go in the direction mentioned by you. I feel sure that the New Zealand Parliament, anxious as it is to see the Navigator group, as well as other groups, under British control, would never sanction the expenditure of so large a sum as £200,000 for the purpose. If, however, the Imperial Government were to make some arrangement for their purchase, they might attach as a condition the repayment of the money by a sinking fund by the colony to which the islands were annexed. I mention the words "the colony to which the islands were annexed" because I feel sure that it would be impossible to properly manage the islands from London as a centre. There will have to be some local control. The French Government have created for Tahiti and Marquesas a General Council, something equivalent to the English form of managing Crown colonies; and they have done the same for New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands. This might work; but the Samoan group is too small for a Council, and it would be better that they should be managed by some colony.

2. The need, in view of the opening of the Panama Canal, of the Imperial Government taking some more active interest in the Pacific Islands question I need not further refer to, as in various letters and correspondence this matter has been frequently urged. I would, however, point out that, from private letters received by me from Samoa, I learn that the islanders are still in a condition of unrest, and the dread of German annexation is still ever present with them. I hope that some means may be found for enabling the Imperial Government to comply with the wishes of the Samoan Islanders, and generally for extending a British protectorate over those islands whose inhabitants desire that they should be under British rule.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 23.

The PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 1st December, 1885.

A.-1, '86, No. 13.

I have the honour to enclose, for your information, copy of a letter addressed by the Hon. the Native Minister to His Excellency the Governor, giving an account of his recent interviews at Auckland with the Queen of Rarotonga. Ministers are quite in accord with the views expressed by Mr. Ballance, and they have asked His Excellency to transmit the letter for the consideration of the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., Agent-General.

ROBERT STOUT.

No. 24.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the PREMIER.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 2nd December, 1885.

I transmit to you herewith a copy of a letter I have received from the Colonial Office, covering a despatch from Governor Drummond Jervois to the Secretary of State, dated the 12th September last, with Colonel Stanley's reply, dated the 23rd ultimo.

You already know that I propose, whenever the general election shall be over, to approach the Secretary of State once more on the Pacific Islands question, in obedience to your instructions. At present I ought not, perhaps, to say more than that you are sure to read between the lines of Colonel Stanley's despatch. The "valuable equivalent" to France means, of course, the New Hebrides; and, as regards Fiji, an opportunity is afforded of stating what guarantees New Zealand would offer that "native interests" would be secured.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.